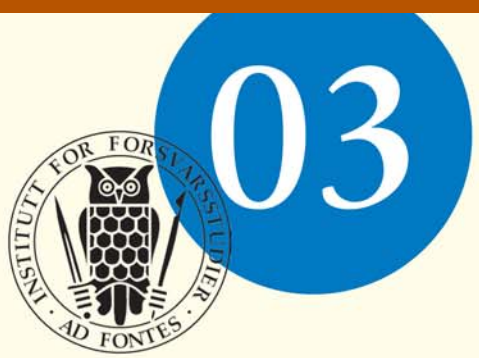

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How Peace Diplomacy Lost Post 9/11

What Implications are there for Norway?

OSLO FILES

ON DEFENCE AND SECURITY— 03/2007

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SUMMARY

Peace diplomacy has been a Norwegian foreign policy priority ever since the early successes of the Oslo channel in the Middle East. Though the nineties were a golden decade for peace diplomacy, the situation changed after 11 September 2001. Non-state parties to a number of internal conflicts have been labelled terrorist organizations, and the international community has tended to address such conflicts just as situations of one state fighting against terrorism. Instead, many internal, asymmetrical conflicts should be seen as cases of unfinished or incomplete state-building processes, and the international response should be one of supporting restructuring of the state to ensure all parts of society are included. This would require a willingness from governments to engage in asymmetrical diplomacy, implying negotiation with terrorists.

International anti-terrorism measures have significantly constrained efforts to negotiate a peace. This has also had implications for Norway as its peace diplomacy has been caught between international anti-terrorism policies which it cannot influence, and peace diplomacy ambitions which it cannot live up to precisely because of the policies mentioned. This has led to the effectiveness and relevance of Norway's peace diplomacy increasingly being called into question. In response, Norway should shape more comprehensive and less compartmentalized peace and security policies.

INSTITUTT FOR FORSVARSSTUDIER Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies
ISSN 1504-6753 © Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies
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INTRODUCTION

Peace diplomacy[1] has played an increasingly important role in international affairs since the end of the cold war and in Norway, successive governments have prioritized it in terms of their political efforts, public profile, and resource allocation. To some extent it has become a Norwegian foreign policy "brand"[2], and researchers have even suggested that Norway's ambitions in this field are part of a mental nation-building exercise.[3]

What, then, has the impact been? Scrutiny of Norwegian peace diplomacy has been rather limited and patchy. The Oslo process has been the subject of one research project[4] and several books of varying quality. Some researchers and journalists have criticized to some degree the nation's individual peace efforts and the very notion of peace diplomacy as a foreign policy priority. In a recent article Professor Øyvind Østerud at the University of Oslo claimed that the "idealistic halo" of this policy makes it difficult to assess its results critically.[5] Others have insisted that there is a lack of public scrutiny and debate because of a largely self-serving foreign policy establishment which seeks to avoid any such discussion.[6]

Even though I cannot lay claim to any critical distance to the subject, in this essay I shall reflect on the impact of peace diplomacy.[7] My main focus will be on how conditions for peace diplomacy have been affected by the international

1 I will use this term, as well as the term "peace efforts", to cover efforts to initiate, promote, support, mediate and successfully conclude peace negotiations.

2 Mark Leonard, *Public Diplomacy* (London: The Foreign Policy Centre, June 2002).

3 The "Power and Democracy" research project 1998–2003 was initiated by the Norwegian parliament in order to study the state of Norwegian democracy. Its final report states that "[o]ver the last 10–12 years a massive, symbolic self-image has been built of Norway as an idealistic small country engaged in a huge effort for peace, human rights and development." Øyvind Østerud, Fredrik Engelstad and Per Selle, *Makten og demokratiet. En sluttbok fra Makt- og demokratiutredningen*, [Power and Democracy: A Final Report of the Power and Democracy Study] (Oslo: Gyldendal, 2003), p. 266.

4 Hilde Henriksen Waage, *Peacemaking Is a Risky Business. Norway's Role in the Peace Process in the Middle East, 1993–96*, PRIO Report no. 1 (Oslo: International Peace Research Institute 2004).

5 Øyvind Østerud, "Lite land som humanitær stormakt?" [Small Country as Humanitarian Great Power?], *Nytt Norsk Tidsskrift*, vol. 4 (2006): 312. See also for example Olav Riste, "Ideal og eigeninteresser: Utviklinga av den norske utanrikspolitiske tradisjonen" [Ideals and self interests: the development of the Norwegian foreign policy tradition], in *Motstrøms: Olav Riste og norsk historieskrivning* [Against the Tide: Olav Riste and Norwegian historical research], eds. Sven G. Holtsmark, Helge Ø. Pharo & Rolf Tamnes, (Oslo: Cappelen Akademisk Forlag, 2003).

6 Terje Tvedt, *Utviklingshjelp, utenrikspolitikk og makt: Den norske modellen* [Development Aid, Foreign Policy and Power: The Norwegian Model] (Oslo: Gyldendal Akademisk, 2003).

7 As Norwegian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs 2001–05 I had responsibility for peace diplomacy, with an active role in several peace efforts, not least the peace process in Sri Lanka. I prepared much of this essay in the last quarter 2005, but was not able to complete it before being consumed by new responsibilities. The opinions expressed here are entirely personal.

security context after 11 September 2001, and how Norway has responded and should respond. I shall seek to demonstrate that the success of peace diplomacy is to a great extent determined by global security realities often outside the control of warring or third parties. Today, the dominant global security issue is terrorism and the global efforts to combat it. As a founding member of NATO with a strong, transatlantic orientation, Norway has taken part actively in these efforts. I shall argue that international efforts against terrorism have not differentiated sufficiently the threat of global terrorist networks from terrorism expressed in national contexts, and that measures against terrorism have been correspondingly inadequate. This flaw in the international response to terrorism has had an adverse impact on conditions for peace negotiations, including Norwegian peace diplomacy, making the resolution of internal conflicts more difficult. Facing this dilemma of competing policy areas has been a challenge for Norway. Institutional shortcomings, inadequate integration of policy-making processes and turf protection tendencies have hampered the possibilities to face the dilemma effectively. Furthermore, its non-membership of the European Union has barred Norway from influencing EU policies which have a severe impact on conditions for Norwegian peace diplomacy. These factors have made Norway's resourceful and creative peace diplomacy less effective in contributing to international peace and security policies.

PEACE DIPLOMACY AS A MIRROR OF GLOBAL REALITIES

Peace has been an international political aspiration ever since the Hague Peace Conference in 1899, an organizing principle for the international community since the inception of the League of Nations in 1919, and a legal aspiration since the Briand-Kellogg Pact of 1928. The early part of the last century saw a remarkable process of the international codification of peace aspirations and regulation of war conduct, only to be followed by the bloodiest conflicts in the history of mankind. Two world wars inspired the adoption of the United Nations Charter in 1945. The Charter reinforces the objective of world peace by virtue of provisions to make war an illegal instrument of state conduct and to establish mechanisms to enforce this legal regime. The underlying logic was self-evident. War was seen mainly as an occurrence between sovereign states, and peace between states therefore required effective protection of state sovereignty, and correspondingly a strict principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of states.

This state-centered nature of international law and diplomacy has been rather successful in preventing, avoiding and resolving conflicts between states. Throughout the cold war period, however, an increasing proportion of conflicts appeared within states, not between them. Efforts were made by the international community to address such conflicts, but these efforts were constrained by the principles and practices of international law and diplomacy with their

emphasis on sovereignty and non-intervention. The very same principles and practices that had been designed to prevent conflict *between* states, rendered the international community ineffective in preventing conflict *within* states. Furthermore, throughout the cold war, intra-state conflicts tended to be seen as expressions of East-West polarization. If the state was supported by the west, the rebel movement[8] was often supported by the east and vice versa. This very fact implies that intra-state conflicts were and are not always fully internal; they regularly have international components even when the origins and visible parties to the conflict are internal.

The cold war period was also marked by decolonization, and throughout this period movements long labelled terrorist ended up in government. While these were liberation processes which in principle were fought between the colonial power and nationalist movements, they were often influenced by cold war rivalry. Hence the realities of the cold war restricted opportunities for peace diplomacy.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, international attention turned to the many intra-state conflicts in a different way. First, as the cold war lid had been removed from these simmering conflicts they could be assessed on their merits rather than on cold war politics. Secondly, the end to cold war politics enabled the international community to address these conflicts with peace diplomacy efforts or even intervention. During the first half of the 1990s, the Security Council, which had largely been paralyzed since its inception, authorized unprecedented military interventions in what were predominantly internal conflicts in Bosnia, Somalia, Rwanda and Haiti.

The challenges and opportunities of the new international security environment were recognized not only in ad hoc decisions of the Security Council. The new security environment paved the way for a significantly broadened understanding of what constituted threats to the peace. At the first-ever summit meeting of the UN Security Council, in itself an expression of a new era, the heads of state and government declared that: "The absence of war and military conflicts amongst States does not in itself ensure international peace and security. The non-military sources of instability in the economic, social, humanitarian and ecological fields have become threats to international peace and security."[9]

PEACE DIPLOMACY'S "GOLDEN DECADE"

This was an important recognition; that peace and security were no longer a matter of conflict only between states, and no longer just a matter of military force. This new environment gave way to new approaches and actors in the

8 I use the term rebel movement as a generic term, where I could have used guerillas, insurgents, militants, or other terms.

9 United Nations, Note by the President of the Security Council, S/23500, 31 January 1993, p. 3.

field of peace and security. As long as security was largely about military force, the state was traditionally in a monopolist position as a security actor. With the recognition of non-military sources of instability, came the increasing recognition of a role for non-state actors to address economic, social, humanitarian and ecological security concerns. Throughout the nineties, for better or worse, a proliferation of non-state actors ensued in the field of peace and security. Again, the global realities determined the framework for peace diplomacy.

The most remarkable example was the role played by the Norwegian research institute FAFO in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. A survey of Palestinian living conditions triggered the process which led to the Oslo Agreement. It was seen as acceptable and even desirable that a non-governmental actor perform peace diplomacy on behalf of a government, and it was seen as laudable that it led negotiations with the previously terrorist-labelled Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO).

Inspired by the early successes of the Oslo channel, successive Norwegian governments made peace diplomacy an explicit part of foreign policy, and they made partnerships with NGOs an essential vehicle with which to conduct such diplomacy in a number of areas, including the Middle East, Guatemala, Colombia, Sudan, Sri Lanka and the Philippines. Norway was not the only government making peace diplomacy a priority. The Canadian, Swiss and Swedish governments also stepped up their support of peace efforts. Peace diplomacy has become a crowded field of governments, various UN actors not necessarily operating in a coordinated fashion, national and international NGOs and research institutions. Media attention, political attention, and the amounts of aid money available, have contributed to a surge of NGOs in the fields of humanitarian assistance, development, and conflict prevention and resolution.

The increasing involvement of the international community in resolving internal conflicts, and the fact that much of this involvement is carried out by NGOs, are expressions of a process in which the nation-state is losing its monopoly to deal with peace and security. In several fields and by various means the state and borders between states are being challenged: by transnational companies, NGOs, the Internet, and by "super-empowered individuals."[10] Even the very core of state functions, military defense, is outsourced today to an extent never seen since the Westphalia peace in 1648.[11] In international policy doctrine and practice, traditional notions of state sovereignty have come under pressure from the advance of universal human rights principles. The concepts of human

10 This phrase has been used by Thomas Friedman to illustrate how actions by individuals can have considerable impact on world politics or economies. See Thomas L. Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (New York: Anchor Books, 2000) pp. 14–16.

11 For an intriguing survey of this development, see Peter W. Singer, *Corporate Warriors* (London: Cornell University Press, 2003).

security and the "responsibility to protect" have gained ground, as expressed in the Outcome Document of the UN General Assembly 2005.[12] However, it remains to be seen whether this trend will be sustained, given the repercussions of the Iraq war as well as new configurations of global and regional powers. There are signs that non-intervention is back in fashion.

The weakened position of the state has a darker side: that of increased vulnerability. The advance of globalization means the easier flow of not only wealth and benefits but also of threats and risks, such as environmental crises, pandemics, and not least: global terrorism.

9/11 AND THE RETURN OF A DIFFERENT "COLD WAR"

The post cold war era was short lived as one of somewhat disorganized opportunity and optimism facilitated by globalization. The Rwanda genocide marked an end to the optimism, and 11 September 2001 marked the beginning of a new era. The fact that 9/11 fundamentally changed international affairs has become a truism. The notion of a single, huge threat returned as the organizing principle of foreign policy. Terrorism and the efforts to combat it came to dominate the agenda of international organizations and governments. The broader security concept which was recognized in the aftermath of the cold war, with its emphasis on the diversity of risks, suddenly became less relevant in international policy making processes. As the vulnerability of state institutions and state borders came to the fore, state security in a more narrow sense was back in focus. True, there were voices of reason which warned against forgetting the complexity of and interlinkages between global threats and risks. The "UN High Level Panel on Challenges, Opportunities and Change" presented a convincing report to this effect.[13] Nevertheless, the security agendas and the decision-making processes of the most influential governments and key international organizations like the UN, the EU and NATO were focused almost exclusively on terrorism and the need to combat it.[14]

Prioritizing fighting global terrorism has left little room in which to address other risks effectively. On the contrary, mechanisms long in place to address other risks have to some extent been put to use in an anti-terrorism context: even humanitarian and development assistance. It can reasonably be argued that terrorism has become policy making's mental Berlin Wall: this is a major inter-

12 United Nations, United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/60/1, 24 October 2005.

13 United Nations, *A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility*, report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, 1 December 2004, United Nations General Assembly Doc A/59/565.

14 It can reasonably be argued that the Iraq war should not be categorized as a challenge of terrorism. However, it was pursued as such by the United States, and few could deny that *today* Iraq is a considerable problem of terrorism.

national challenge in its own right, but it also tends to stand in the way of addressing a wide range of other challenges.

It can also be argued that some expressions and repercussions of the global fight against terrorism have contributed to a degree of polarization not seen since the cold war. This polarization is evidenced by the "with us or against us" approach to diplomacy, the controversies of the process leading to war in Iraq, and grave violations of humanitarian law and human rights in the conduct of the so-called war on terrorism. The ideological drive by the US government to promote democracy has been seen as inconsistently applied to various regimes, thus triggering accusations of hidden agendas and double standards. Coupled with the exclusion of large parts of the world's population from the gains of economic globalization, as marked by the unwillingness of richer countries to pursue a WTO agreement,[15] it is not entirely unreasonable today to talk of a polarization no less profound than that of the cold war.

THE CONFUSION OF GLOBAL AND NATIONAL TERRORISM

The effectiveness of the campaign against terrorism has been subject to much and heated debate. Less attention has been given to the effects of the campaign on national terrorism situations. Global terrorism and national terrorism have been confused, or rather, not sufficiently differentiated. While it was global Al Qaida terrorism which necessitated new and dramatic responses by the international community, there has been little reflection on whether the same kinds of responses are adequate against national terrorism, i.e. terrorism as an expression of national conflicts.

The purpose of this essay is not to address the highly divisive issue of the definition of terrorism. I shall merely refer to the definition proposed by the UN Secretary General in 2005:

> any action constitutes terrorism if it is intended to cause death or serious bodily harm to civilians or non-combatants with the purpose of intimidating a population or compelling a Government or an international organization to do or abstain from doing any act.[16]

Terrorism is a means of warfare often used by the non-state party in an asymmetric conflict, as well as by global networks. But Al Qaida terrorism is different from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam's (LTTE) terrorism in Sri Lanka. Many if not most internal conflicts include a rebel movement which applies

15 As this script underwent its final reading, news came that the Doha round of WTO negotiations would be resumed.

16 United Nations, *In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all*, report of the Secretary-General, 21 March 2005, United Nations General Assembly Doc A/59/2005.

unacceptable methods of warfare which qualify as terrorism. In the era of global terrorism, asymmetrical conflicts at the national level have increasingly come to be seen through the prism of the global campaign against terrorism. While it is reasonable to argue that acts of terrorism are equally unjustified and worthy of condemnation in any situation, this should not automatically be translated into adopting equal policies to address terrorism of global and national natures, because the political underpinnings of terrorism are contextual and therefore different.

Asymmetrical conflicts within states precede global terrorism. Long before 11 September 2001, it was customary for governments to label rebel or opposition movements as terrorists, introduce national prevention of terrorism acts, and apply other anti-terrorism policies. Hence addressing internal conflicts from an anti-terrorism perspective is not new. However, since 9/11 nationally motivated policies and practices have conceptually been made part of the global campaign against terrorism. For the state facing a terrorist rebel group, this has provided an opportunity to mobilize the international community to support its national policies. It is a recognized fact that this has led to less human rights protection in many countries. It has also had an impact on efforts to bring about conflict resolution. When an internal conflict is treated as a case of terrorism, attention is paid not so much to the dynamics of the conflict as to the tactics of terrorists. It follows that the rebel movement using terrorist methods thus deprives itself of any legitimacy. Correspondingly the state, being the target of terrorist violence, easily wins the stamp of approval of the international community. As fighting terrorism is the single most important security objective of the international community, a state defending itself against terrorism is often not under any pressure to justify its range of policies, and faces less harsh international reactions against the disproportionate use of force. On the contrary, the state is increasingly lent supportive action in the form of the rebels being listed internationally as terrorists, military or security assistance to fight terrorism, and measures to curb the flow of finances to territories controlled by the rebels.

Given the unacceptable nature of terrorism and the importance to the world community of curbing terrorism, it is not necessarily unreasonable to view a conflict between a state and a rebel group as a conflict between a legitimate and an illegitimate actor. Stopping at that, however, is not necessarily effective in bringing an end to conflict or an end to terrorism.

ASYMMETRICAL CONFLICTS AS UNFINISHED STATE-BUILDING

Most conflicts today which involve a group applying terrorist measures originated before 11 September 2001, and should be understood against a wider background than that of terrorism alone. Some conflicts can be traced back to the colonial era. Some have been caused or sustained by policies of exclusion or marginalization, or policies which deprive large segments of society of eco-

nomic opportunity. Whether it be Sudan, Northern Uganda, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Pakistan, Colombia, the Philippines, Somalia, Iraq, or Palestine, a variety of such factors combine to determine the nature of the conflict. Addressing such conflicts mainly as situations of a state fighting against terrorism will not facilitate resolution.

A different and arguably more adequate perspective on asymmetrical conflicts would be to see them as cases of unfinished or incomplete state-building processes. Emerging from the colonial era, newly independent states often failed to resolve internal conflicts that had been kept in check, ignored, or even abused by the colonial power. Relative stability may have been maintained for decades after liberation due to individual leaders who commanded wide respect as liberators, or also due to policies of repression, division or deprivation. Such policies rarely remove the underlying problems, however. In some situations the rebel movement can be seen as representing people or groups of people that were not fully or fairly incorporated into or by the state. Such groups may have turned violent over time, not infrequently because the state, instead of resolving the problems, exacerbated them due to continued policies of discrimination, marginalization, exclusion or polarization.

As conflicts have political causes, they need to be resolved by political means. If the international community addresses such conflicts with anti-terrorism policies that do not only seek to limit or put an end to terrorist actions, but that also limit or put an end to opportunities for dialogue, then the international community risks exacerbating the conflict by reinforcing what created it in the first place: the exclusion of groups from political participation and influence. Military action, economic sanctions, or diplomatic and political isolation may risk increasing and entrenching the problems that were part of the reason for the groups taking up terrorism.

The issue is not whether or not to go easy on terrorism. It is which policies are likely to work. Sometimes heavy-handed responses are necessary. The fact cannot be ignored that terrorist groups may have developed vested interests in criminal activities, even though such activities were not part of their motivation from the outset. Such vested interests can perpetuate conflict, and they need to be addressed. However, it is difficult to imagine resolving the conflict that created terrorism just by addressing the terrorist expressions of the conflict. Its political underpinnings must be dealt with at some point, via a political process.

If one accepts that many internal, asymmetrical conflicts may be regarded as unfinished or incomplete state-building processes, then the international response should be to support restructuring the state to ensure all parts of society are included. This process would not get off to a good start if groups viewed as representing marginalized groups were excluded from dialogue from the outset.

Recent examples can be cited that international isolationist policies on rebel movements and terrorist groups have not necessarily helped resolve conflict. It can reasonably be argued that the Sri Lankan government's refusal for several years to allow the international community to engage with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), and that the international community accepted this refusal, helped bring about a range of miscalculations by the LTTE leadership which entrenched the conflict. The EU's terrorist listing of the LTTE has added to the isolation and probably exacerbated these miscalculations. Regarding the Philippines, the EU's terrorist listing of the communist New People's Army has for years been the single, repeated excuse for the communists not returning to negotiations. The complexities of terrorist listing were also demonstrated throughout the "democratic revolution" in Nepal in the spring of 2006. When the Maoists started taking part in transitional negotiations with the Nepalese government, several countries were still not able to engage with them, due to national policies enacted against the Maoists which could not quickly and easily be amended.

THE NEED FOR ASYMMETRIC DIPLOMACY

One might argue that if asymmetric conflicts are to be resolved then asymmetric diplomacy is needed, meaning that states should learn to negotiate with terrorists. When dealing with internal conflicts, international actors should go a long way to engage with the rebel movement, even if it applies terrorist tactics. Such engagement should pursue a number of aims. First, one should seek to gain a better understanding of the political rationale and constituencies of the rebel movement. Second, one should seek to make the rebel movement understand, by allowing it to experience it in the process, that political engagement is the best way to achieve political objectives. Third, one should effectively communicate the need for the movement to cease its terrorist activities.

Only if foreign states are themselves willing to engage with terrorists, can they have enough credibility to insist that the government in conflict should negotiate. Effective pressure on a government to participate in a peace process cannot be applied credibly if the international community refuses to engage with rebel movements. For a rebel movement to see merit in political dialogue, the state with which it is at conflict must make politics look an attractive and serious means of reaching political objectives. In dialogue with governments, the international community should encourage reforms which can complete the unfinished state-building process and make democratic politics inclusive of and attractive to the segments of the population that have been excluded.

Policies and practices of non-engagement have also proven to be problematic in the most critical of today's conflicts. The first war against global terrorism in Afghanistan brought about the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001. In the immediate aftermath, there were those who advocated the need to engage

politically with the so-called moderate Taliban. However, the US-led coalition ruled this out, claiming in part that there was no such thing as moderate Taliban. But this approach changed over time. On a visit to Afghanistan in 2003 as Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, I was asked by Lakhdar Brahimi, the UN Special Representative, whether Norway might play a role in facilitating dialogue with moderate Taliban elements. Though Norway acquiesced to this request, it proved difficult, and it is likely that much would have been gained by adopting such a dialogue-oriented approach early on following the fall of the Taliban in 2001, while the Taliban were much weakened.

Similarly, in Iraq, no one today would reasonably contest that the policy of "de-Baathification" after the fall of the Saddam Hussein's regime and the Baath party contributed to the catastrophe now unfolding there.[17] In Palestine, the issue of whether to engage in dialogue with the present coalition government, the Hamas government before it, and the Fatah government before that, is an unfinished story of incoherent approaches by different international actors.

NORWAY: BETWEEN MULTILATERAL LOYALTIES AND PEACE AMBITIONS

The Hamas issue is the most striking example of how new global realities have led to a more difficult position for Norwegian peace diplomacy: The government which succeeded in getting Israeli politicians to talk to the terrorist-labelled PLO in 1993 has today itself not been able to talk to the terrorist-labelled Hamas government of the Palestinian Authority. This resulted from Norway aligning itself with EU and US policies. Norway is caught between international anti-terrorism policies which it cannot influence and peace diplomacy ambitions it cannot live up to precisely because of the policies mentioned. Independent action by Norway, such as engaging with the Hamas-Fatah coalition government, risks provoking harsh reactions – neither does it necessarily amount to effective peace diplomacy.[18]

The contrast is striking to the way Norway was able to exploit in full the opportunities offered by the post cold war situation 15 years ago to make peace diplomacy a foreign policy priority. Ever since the Oslo Channel, a number of peace initiatives were supported, e.g. in Guatemala, Colombia, Sudan, Sri Lanka and the Philippines. In today's "age of terrorism" with its new constraints on peace diplomacy, Norway is struggling to square the circle of being a loyal team player helping to demonstrate a united international front against terrorism, while at the same time wanting to support negotiated solutions to conflicts in which one party has been labelled a terrorist organization.

17 See, for example, Bob Woodward, *State of Denial: Bush at War, Part III* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006).

18 The news that the Norwegian government would establish relations with the Palestinian coalition government, came as this essay went to print.

Against this backdrop, what might the way forward be for Norwegian peace diplomacy? Some critics seem to be suggesting that Norway's efforts have in any case been futile and might as well cease. Østerud suggests that studies demonstrate that lasting peace is more likely following the victory of one party to a civil war than following a negotiated settlement. [19] As a static observation of the period since 1945, this is correct. Throughout the cold war period, 93 armed conflicts ended in victory while less than half as many, 45, ended in negotiated settlements. In recent times this situation has changed fundamentally. In the nineties, 23 ended in victory and 42 in negotiated settlements. True, the negotiated settlements have a high rate of failure, as 18 of the 42 conflicts had restarted within 5 years.[20] Nevertheless, during the nineties there were 24 successful negotiated settlements, compared to 21 successful conflict terminations as a result of victories. In one third of conflicts recorded after the cold war, the parties to conflict concluded peace agreements.[21] Hence, drawing the conclusion that negotiations are fruitless is erroneous.

Østerud also seems to be suggesting that international engagement can be counterproductive, and it may even prolong conflicts.[22] While this may have been the case in individual conflicts, it is not a generally valid observation. Barbara Walter's 2002 study of the successful settlement of civil wars concludes that between 1940 and 1992, "if a third party assisted with implementation, negotiations almost always succeeded."[23] Østerud also overlooks the fact that in many civil wars, the outright victory of one side is simply not a military possibility.

However, it is apparent that many peace processes, peace agreements and implementation mechanisms are poorly designed. As peace mediation is such a new field, this should come as no surprise, but much effort is being directed into research into and analysis of how to improve the quality of such processes.[24]

The most recent global research on negotiated settlements may suggest that Norwegian efforts have been relatively unsuccessful, as far as lasting peace agreements go. If one takes a long-term, state building perspective on conflict resolution, however, it is simplistic to say that the breakdown of a peace agree-

19 Øyvind Østerud, "Lite land som humanitær stormakt?" [Small Country as Humanitarian Great Power?], *Nytt Norsk Tidsskrift*, vol. 4 (2006): 311.

20 Human Security Centre, *Human Security Brief 2006* (University of British Columbia, Canada), p. 20.

21 Lotta Harbom, Stina Högbladh & Peter Wallensteen, "Armed Conflicts and Peace Agreements", *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 43, no. 5 (2006): 617–631.

22 Øyvind Østerud, "Lite land som humanitær stormakt?" [Small Country as Humanitarian Great Power?], *Nytt Norsk Tidsskrift*, vol. 4 (2006): 310.

23 Barbara F. Walter, *Committing to Peace: the Successful Settlement of Civil Wars* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002) p. 11.

24 When the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs initiated, in collaboration with the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, an annual "Mediators' Retreat" in 2003, it was the first meeting of its kind, testifying to the pioneer nature of peace mediation. Furthermore, the establishment the same year of a Section for Peace and Reconciliation in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was also an effort to move beyond individual engagements and shape better policies based on lessons learnt.

ment proves the entire effort futile. Even if an individual peace initiative fails, there may be lessons learnt, or institutions built, that can be important for later efforts. As an example, the very existence today of a Palestinian Authority, thanks to the Oslo Agreements, has changed the dynamics of the Middle East Peace Process in a lasting way.

This is not to say that Norwegian diplomacy could not have been conducted more productively. In the Oslo process, failing to establish international monitoring of the agreements probably helped derail the peace process. Israel flatly rejected proposals for such monitoring, and Norway was in no position to pressure the Israeli government. Norwegian mediators might, however, have called on the U.S, which at the time was far more willing than today to apply conditions to its support to Israel. As the US administration had not taken the Oslo process that seriously from the outset, Norwegian facilitators did not effectively try to engage the US administration in the final phases of the secret negotiations, which were apparently marked by rather uncompromising Israeli positions. If the US had been effectively engaged, however, then one cannot rule out that monitoring arrangements could have been worked out. In Sri Lanka, Norwegian efforts should probably have been more sharply focused on much needed reform agendas as part of the architecture of the peace process both within the Sri Lankan state and the LTTE.

PEACE DIPLOMACY AS A SIDE SHOW

While there are failures of Norwegian peace efforts from which lessons should be learned, there are also strengths that should be maintained and built upon. The Norwegian approach to peace facilitation has involved innovative and creative diplomacy. The traditionally risk-averse diplomatic culture, still prevalent in other parts of Norwegian Foreign Service, has given way to a trial and error approach in the field of supporting peace and reconciliation initiatives. There is extensive use of partnerships with non-governmental organizations, at times using such organizations more or less as agents of foreign policy while maintaining official "deniability" during secret phases of a peace process. In this lies an understanding that the different phases of peace processes require different actors and actions, and a readiness to act flexibly and apply the resources necessary to manage just that. Humanitarian and development aid budgets are used flexibly to create and sustain constituencies for peace, even including catering for the individual needs of key actors in peace processes. A separate budget line for "peace and reconciliation" as well as a special unit have been established to support the politics and practicalities of peace processes. An important enabling factor was the high degree of commitment and time spent by political level officials. This direct engagement of politicians has facilitated fast decision-making, regularly short-cutting the normal lines of reporting of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Above all, the ability to sustain setbacks results from the broad political

support for peace diplomacy, and correspondingly an understanding in Parliament of the need for flexibility and creativity when managing this particular field of diplomacy.

However, although peace diplomacy is a priority, there has been a misperception, fuelled by individual politicians as well as the media that it occupies centre stage of Norwegian foreign policy. Evidently, the foreign policy of any country must prioritize immediate, national interests. For Norway, vital interests are not least at stake in two fields. First, the energy, environmental and security concerns in the high north, and the challenging relationship with Russia, including the unresolved maritime border issue. Second, Norway's outsider role in Europe as it is not a member of the EU, the equally pressing need to sustain a strong transatlantic relationship with the US, and the need to keep NATO relevant as the only regional security alliance of which Norway is a member. These two challenges are related, as the somewhat lonely position of Norway in the high north prompts the need for strong alliances with Europe and/or the US.

Compared to these vital interests, peace facilitation efforts may seem marginal. I would argue that they are not, but some advocates of peace efforts have regrettably and unwillingly helped make peace diplomacy seem a side show performed by do-gooders on the margins of foreign policy. A policy to support peace initiatives comes with the risk of national self-glorification which in turn makes peace efforts an easy target for cynics. While there have been some remarkable achievements, the Oslo Agreements first among them, politicians have not always resisted the temptation to use these to overestimate Norway's international role. Portraying Norway as a nation of peace, or a humanitarian great power, may be possible to grasp in a national context and for domestic political purposes. But such statements risk being self-defeating as they can create the impression that peace diplomacy is part of a national branding exercise. More detrimental still is the position held by some that there is a contradiction between playing an active role in supporting peace processes and engaging in international military operations. This is a view of peace efforts as an alternative or even a countermeasure to other key elements of foreign policy. Advocates of such positions have argued that Norway should reduce or halt participation in international military and security operations, and instead concentrate its efforts on humanitarian, development and peace and reconciliation efforts. Such approaches, if enacted, would be counterproductive. As shown by the impact of the global campaign against terrorism on asymmetrical conflicts, opportunities for peace diplomacy depend heavily on the global security environment. If Norwegian peace efforts are to produce achievements over and above national pretentiousness, they should not be pursued in isolation. On the contrary, peace and reconciliation efforts should be incorporated into comprehensive peace and security policies. First, there is a need for such a comprehensive approach to be formed between different players within the Norwegian government. Second,

with comprehensive policies Norway should, aim to contribute more effectively to international policies that influence conditions for peace diplomacy.

THE NEED TO MAINSTREAM PEACE DIPLOMACY

Many of today's internal conflicts, including those in which Norway has had a special interest in terms of peace and reconciliation, have regional or even global links that go to the heart of security challenges in the global era. The Horn of Africa (e.g. Sudan and Somalia) has been an area in which Norway has been especially interested, while this area has also been feared as a breeding ground for terrorist networks. Afghanistan is Norway's biggest development partner, and also the country in which Norway makes its greatest NATO troop contributions. The Palestinian Authority, its existence resulting from the Oslo Agreements, is another major development partner. Even the Sri Lankan conflict, while national in origin, has repercussions not least in terms of international criminal networks. Resolving such internal conflicts would serve the international community well, but cannot be achieved through international "one-size-fits-all" policies. A deep understanding of the nature of asymmetrical internal conflict dynamics is required, as well as knowledge of the national political and military actors. Norway possesses considerable resources and experience from a variety of such conflicts. Nevertheless, the lessons learnt have not been effectively transformed into policies which Norway can advance in the relevant international contexts. If Norway is to enhance the impact of its diplomatic and material contributions to peace and security, shifts are needed in Norwegian foreign policy making processes and in Norway's international engagement.

Nationally, bureaucratic traditionalism and turf-protection tendencies must be addressed. To start with, the "peace community" and the "security community" need to interact as foreign policy development is disturbingly compartmentalized. At the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, security policy is largely dealt with as an extension of transatlantic relations. This obviously results from NATO being the pillar of Norway's security policies, and of the USA being by far the most important member of NATO. The fact that NATO is a global player today, with Afghanistan its most important theatre of operations, is a profound change. However, though security challenges have been globalized, national policy making continues to be compartmentalized. With Afghanistan categorized as largely an anti-terrorism and NATO issue post 9/11, Norwegian policy making suffered from a bureaucratic compartmentalization in which the relevant knowledge about Afghanistan and its vicinity, or about the dynamics of conflict and peace building, was insufficiently made use of: it was largely left to diplomats with experience of NATO as a transatlantic actor. Bureaucratically, too, the era of global terrorism reactivated too much of a cold war culture in which security policy is defined as much by the nature of transatlantic relations as by the new global realities such as those on the ground in Afghanistan.

The effect of this bureaucratic policy entrenchment should not be blamed on the "security establishment". The "development establishment" is no less marked by bureaucratic turf and traditionalism which hamper new approaches to global security challenges. Though acknowledging conceptually the importance of the so-called security and development nexus, the development community has consistently been reluctant to use development aid resources on security related development activities. Again, turf protection tendencies prevail.[25]

So what is needed? Policy and decision making processes which are not driven by sectoral perspectives and turf interests, but which capture the *complexities* of present-day conflicts and acknowledge the *time* needed to resolve them. In policy making, where you stand depends on where you sit. If you take the perspective of transatlantic relations, you can shape an apparently consistent policy to deal with the world from that perspective. If you take the perspective of poverty eradication, you can shape a different policy which seems equally consistent. If your perspective is one of trade, or anti-terrorism, or environmental challenges, or culture and religion, the same applies. However, in today's globalized world the reality is that you need to be able to capture all these and more to understand the global picture of risks and threats and address risks and threats to prevent or resolve conflict. This is an almost insurmountable challenge for political and diplomatic processes, as there is a demand for ever-faster decision-making relating to conflict situations of ever-increasing complexity. However, when issues of peace, state and democracy building are at hand, one lesson that can be learned from past failures and successes is that proper processes take time. This has been witnessed in Norwegian and other nations' peace efforts. The desire to rush towards results and have a rapid impact may be detrimental. Ambitious timetables drawn up at conferences by governments or at military headquarters are often out of touch with the realities on the ground in places like Afghanistan, Iraq, Sudan, the Middle East, the Balkans and elsewhere.

INTEGRATING NORWEGIAN PEACE DIPLOMACY WITH INTERNATIONAL REALITIES

For a small state like Norway, shaping foreign policies and making decisions are not predominantly a matter of domestic policy. In an unpredictable world, it is fundamentally in Norway's interests to build lasting alliances and partnerships that can be drawn upon when needs arise. Integrating Norwegian policies with

25 Such tendencies are not a uniquely Norwegian phenomenon. In Sweden the development community, spearheaded by the development agency SIDA, is even more remote from the foreign and security policy development than in Norway. The compartmentalization in US foreign policy has been highlighted by several books, see footnote 23. In the UK, on the other hand, efforts have been made at improving interaction between the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Ministry of Defense and the Department for International Development, including through pooling of resources for country interventions.

those of international partners is therefore necessary. Peace diplomacy should be no exception. Hence Norwegian efforts to shape more coherent national policies should serve the purpose of more effectively contributing to international peace and security policy making.

Peace diplomacy is one area in which Norway can claim some unique experiences. Apart from the great powers, it is unlikely that any other government has the same level of experience of conducting peace negotiations in secret or in the public eye as Norway. Probably no other government has maintained contact with so many rebel movements and leaders, and accumulated such an understanding of their mentality, political outlook and organizations. Norway's ability and willingness to engage and interact with such organizations could be a useful contribution to international policy and decision-making processes in conflict situations. All the most deadly of today's conflicts have asymmetric elements, and the sad state of most of these conflicts calls for creative, non-doctrinal and a result-oriented approach to conflict resolution. Such approaches seem by no means to be in abundance in the major players' policy-making processes.[26] Norway has a proven ability for creative diplomacy which should be used more systematically and effectively to help shape international peace and security responses.

To begin with, Norway should help form a more comprehensive NATO peace and security approach. The success of NATO operations in asymmetrical conflicts depends to a great extent on non-military components. While this has been conceptually recognized, there are serious shortcomings when making these concepts operational. The purpose of military force is to win wars, but more and more often military forces have to try to consolidate peace and development, tasks for which other actors are far more qualified. The concept of "winning hearts and minds" has at times been implemented in a way which leads to a confusion of military and humanitarian actors, accompanied by the risk of compromising the much needed neutrality and impartiality of humanitarian assistance. There are also inconsistencies in security approaches on the ground. In those situations where NATO action is most needed today, the way operations are conducted can determine long-term success or failure, such as taking the cultural and religious context into account when planning and carrying out operations. Reports from NATO operations in Afghanistan indicate less than satisfactory practices in this regard which suggests the need for improvements at the policy-making level as well in the rules of engagement.

Norway has a strong national interest in maintaining NATO as a relevant security actor – but it also has an interest in maintaining it as a forum for trans-

26 For sweeping accounts of US foreign policy decision making under the Bush Sr, Clinton and Bush Jr administrations, see David Halberstam, *War in a Time of Peace: Bush, Clinton and the Generals* (New York: Scribner, 2001) and Bob Woodward, *State of Denial: Bush at War, Part III* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006).

atlantic dialogue for peace and security political issues. More actively seeking to contribute to better NATO policies would be in line with this national interest. Given the purposes and functions of NATO, however, actively influencing its policy-making processes is not just academic. Actual and significant contributions to NATO operations are a prerequisite for influence.

Although a broader approach to peace and security should be supported and advocated , NATO is still a security organization which operates at the military end of international peace and security engagement. The European Union (EU), on the other hand, has the policy-making potential, budgetary capacity and diplomatic reach to address the complexities of present-day asymmetrical conflicts. For all its inability to utilize its potential effectively, the EU is an actor with a greater degree of coherence and far more resources than other international actors, and also has a Security Strategy committed to using these resources to support effective multilateralism and strengthen the UN's role. Today the world faces the urgent challenge of finding more effective policy responses to threats and risks such as terrorism and asymmetrical conflicts, and given the incapacity of even large-scale military approaches to these threats and risks, there is a need for leadership in identifying better policies and practices. The continued strength of the USA and the rise of powerful actors in Asia will certainly provide candidates for global leadership, but if Europe is to be positioned in this field, the EU is the only candidate.

A Norwegian strategy to use better its resourcefulness in peace diplomacy with the aim of improving international peace policies for peace would neither becomplete nor coherent unless there were a much more systematic engagement with the EU regarding policy formulation and the execution of such. While EU policies have a decisive impact on the conditions for Norwegian peace diplomacy, Norway has but very limited impact on EU policies. A case in point is the designation of rebel movements as terrorist organizations, which has had a profound impact on Norwegian peace efforts in Sri Lanka and the Philippines. The practice of terrorist listing effectively disables EU member states – they cannot play key roles in certain conflict resolution processes. From the perspective of narrow self-interest, Norway can capitalize on not being bound by these policies by enhancing its position and profile as an honest broker. This does, however, not add an inch of influence to the conditions for the peace processes in countries like the Philippines or Sri Lanka. A different situation proving the same point relates to the difficult issue of how to treat the Hamas and Hamas/Fatah governments in the Palestinian territories. The freedom which Norway formally enjoys by not aligning itself with the EU's list of terrorist organizations has not led it to adopt fundamentally different approaches than those of the EU member states' governments. And when it does, it tends to weaken rather than strengthen Norway's influence.

As peace diplomacy is a foreign policy priority for Norway, it should be conducted not only on the basis of good intentions but with a considerable degree of realism. While there have been certain achievements, Norway's efforts at peace diplomacy are demonstrably constrained today by policies and decisions beyond Norway's influence. A more effective Norwegian role in promoting peace and security will require Norway to influence NATO and EU policy formulation and execution more effectively. Achieving this depends on political choices well beyond symbolic gestures of peace diplomacy.

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